



Memo re: proposed bylaw amendments

To: CWCF Membership
From: Hazel Corcoran, for the Board of CWCF
Date: October 25, 2023

CWCF's Board of Directors is proposing amendments to the CWCF by-laws. The purpose of the amendments is three-fold:

- 1) to add the member category of "Friends" of the Federation,
- 2) to expand the types of members who can run for the Board of Directors to include Worker Co-op Developer Members and Friends, within set limits, and
- 3) to make the language of the bylaws gender-neutral.

Friends of the Federation would be individuals who work in solidarity with CWCF and lend it their support. The Board of CWCF will confirm the membership of each individual which applies, as it does with all members. The background is that a discussion was held at last year's AGM on amending the bylaws to admit unincorporated collectives through appointed individuals, but this was found to be overly complex; e.g., if and when an appointed individual left a collective, then that collective would no longer be formally affiliated with the Federation. The genesis of this idea had been raised by racialized co-operators, as many Black-led co-ops are informal and not incorporated, and informal collectives exist in many communities. The reason for the addition of the Friends category instead is to enable including with more flexibility others working in the Solidarity Economy, whether they're in informal collectives or otherwise engaged. This is in keeping with CWCF's strategy to help to build the Solidarity Economy. The Board proposes annual dues on a sliding scale, from \$25 - \$500. It is already possible for incorporated entities to join as Associate Members, with their dues at a set rate of \$500.¹

Regarding director eligibility, CWCF's Board is made up at this point of representatives of Regular Members (worker co-operatives and similar entities) and Regional Federation Members. Five of the seats are for regional directors (Atlantic, Quebec, Ontario, Prairies/ NWT/ NU, and BC/ Yukon), with two held at-large for a total of 7 directors. The CWCF Board believes that it would be strengthened by allowing Worker Co-op Developer Members and Friends to run for some seats, although it believes that the majority of seats should be held by worker co-operatives. Many worker co-op members are challenged to find the time to serve on an additional board such as CWCF's. Opening up the eligibility in this way could bring in relevant experience and skills, increase diversity, and help avoid vacancies. It is proposed that we keep the limit of 2 directors from Regional Federations, and add a new cap of 2 directors from the combination of Developers and Friends with a limit of 3 directors in total from all of these categories (Regional Federations, Developers, and Friends). In this way, worker co-op members would have a minimum of four out of seven seats on the Board.

¹ Note that entities which become associate members in order to use the Common Good Capital (RRSP/TFSA) Program pay \$100/ year in dues, plus applicable fees.



Further, when a director is no longer working for a Regular Member, or when the Regular Member has ceased operating or ceased to be eligible for membership, the Board believes that the director should be allowed to continue to serve out their term.

Lastly, the Board believes that it is preferable to be more inclusive in the language of the bylaws by moving from the use of “she/ her” and “he/ him” to “they/ them”. In this way, we include not only men and women but also those who are nonbinary, genderfluid, etc.